



An Overview of Scottish History and Records to 1800

Craig L. Foster, MA, MLIS, AG®
fostercl@familysearch.org

Scotland's history is one of pain and pride, struggle and steadfastness

A Timeline of Scotland's History

300 – The term Pict is first used when describing the tribes in what is now Scotland.

400s – The Gaelic kingdom of Dál Riata is created in the western part of Scotland and the northern portion of Ireland.

Mid-800s – Kenneth macAlpin, King of Dál Riada, conquers the Kingdom of the Picts and creates the Kingdom of Alba. To solidify his power over the Picts, he is said to have married a Pictish princess, thus uniting the two ruling houses.

1124 – King David I introduces the feudal system of landholding into Scotland. The National Records of Scotland states, "Until the Abolition of Feudal Tenure (Scotland) Act 2000 came into force in 2004, land in Scotland was held through the feudal system."

A directory of landownership in Scotland, c1770

Deeds, minute books and index of deeds and probate writs : 1542- 1851

Index to the general register of sasines : 1617-1700

Index to the general register of sasines, 1701-1720

Index to register of deeds, 1661-1696

Index of persons, to abridgements of sasines : 1781-1868

Index to places, to abridgement of sasines : 1781-1830

Scotland, owners of lands and heritages : 1872-1873

Services of heirs, 1530-1900

1237 – Scotland's southern border is established in the Treaty of York.

1296 – King Edward I and England invade Scotland

1297 – Andrew de Moray and William Wallace lead the Scots in their victory over the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

1305 – William Wallace is executed in London

1314 – Robert Bruce and the Scots defeat the English at the Battle of Bannockburn

1320 – Declaration of Arbroath is addressed to Pope John XXII declaring Scotland's ancient independence and is signed by fifty-one Scottish magnates and nobles.

1328 – The Treaty of Northampton recognizes Scottish independence.

1371 – Robert II, grandson of Robert Bruce and son of Walter Stewart, 6th High Steward of Scotland, becomes the first ruler of the House of Stewart.

1532 – College of Justice and the Court of Session are created.

From the FamilySearch Catalog:

Scotland - Court records (36)

Scotland - Court records - Handbooks, manuals, etc. (1)

Scotland - Court records - History (2)

Scotland - Court records - Indexes (1)

Scotland - Court records - Inventories, registers, catalogs (6)

1559 - John Knox returns to his native Scotland from Geneva, Switzerland to promote Calvinism.

1560 – Scotland's Protestant Reformation in which the Scots broke with the Catholic Church and the Church of Scotland, became Protestant with an episcopal and presbyterian combined organization.

Gordon Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation*

John Knox and David Buchanan, *The Historie of the Reformation of the Church of Scotland : Containing five books : together with some treatises conducing to the history*

1592 - James VI enacts the "Golden Act" recognizing the power of Presbyterianism within the Scottish church.

1603 - The Union of the Crowns: James VI of Scotland becomes James I of England, but the countries of Scotland and England remain two separate states.

1638 - the National Covenant was signed by large numbers of Scots protesting changes in the church including introduction of the Prayer Book and other liturgical innovations.

Dane Love, *The Covenanter Encyclopaedia*

Brian J. Orr, *As God is my Witness : the Presbyterian Kirk, the Covenanters & the Ulster Scots*

David Stevenson, *The Covenanters : the National Covenant and Scotland*

1660s - Episcopacy was reintroduced to Scotland after the Restoration.

1689-1690 – Episcopacy is abolished and Presbyterianism church government is officially established.

1690 – Many Covenanters established the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland which was more conservative than the Church of Scotland.

1707 - The Acts of Union in which the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland, which had been separate countries with separate parliaments, were united to create the Kingdom of Great Britain.

1711 - Church Patronage (Scotland) Act 1711, giving landowners, or patrons, the right to appoint ministers to vacant pulpits causes dissension, eventually leading to several splits in the Church of Scotland.

1715 - Jacobite rebellion where James Francis Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender) and his followers attempt to regain the thrones of England, Ireland and Scotland for the exiled Stuarts.

1733 - The First Secession from the Church of Scotland over patronage and other issues.

1745 – The Rebellion of 1745 was an attempt by Charles Edward Stuart (the Young Pretender) to regain the British throne for his father, James Francis Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender).

For histories about the Jacobite rebellions:

Scotland - History - 17th century (13)

Scotland - History - 17th century - Sources (1)

Scotland - History - 18th century (12), and also more specifically:

Michael Barthrop and Gerry Embleton, *The Jacobite Rebellions 1689-1745*

David Dobson, *The Jacobites of Angus, 1689-1746*

Henri de Massue, Marquis de Ruvigny, *The Jacobite peerage, baronetage, knightage and grants of honour*

Frances McDonnell, *Highland Jacobites, 1745*

Public Record Office of Great Britain, Jacobite Rebellion 1745 :

T S 20 Treasury solicitors, the 1745 Rebellion papers, 1745- 1753

Alistair and Henrietta Taylor, *Jacobites of Aberdenshire and Banffshire, in the forty-Five*

1746 – On 16 April, the Jacobite army of Charles Edward Stuart was decisively defeated by a British government force under Prince William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, near Inverness in the Scottish Highlands. It was the last pitched battle fought on British soil.

The Act of Proscription was a series of acts of the Parliament of Great Britain, which came into effect in Scotland on 1 August 1746. It was part of a series of efforts to assimilate the Scottish Highlands, ending their ability to revolt, and the first of the "King's laws" that sought to crush the Clan system in the aftermath of the Jacobite rising of 1745.

Traditional Highland dress, possession of arms and bagpipes – which were deemed to be an 'instrument of war,' were banned. Also, a number of Highland landowners who had supported the Jacobites had their estates forfeited as punishment.

These acts brought an end to the Highland clan system.

1760 to 1815 – The first phase of the Highland Clearances by breaking up the traditional townships and moving people from the estates.

1761 - The Second Secession from the Church of Scotland again over patronage and other issues.